

Information Paper

Subject: Key RC Pay Problems and Solutions

1. Receiving accurate information for soldiers arriving and departing European Theater

Problem: This is a major issue for us. Not all RC soldiers in-process through a Central Processing Facility (CPF) and as a result we rely on the units to let us know when RC soldiers have arrived in the European Theater.

Solution: We are working with the RC LNO at USAREUR to obtain the listings versus relying solely on our servicing Finance Offices on who is arriving and leaving theater. We are also asking unit PACs and commanders to inform us about pay problems they have.

2. Difficulties using the Reserve Component Pay System (DJMS-RC)

Problem: The RC pay system is not designed to pay soldiers serving on an active status. This requires the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) to create workarounds to make the pay system function properly when soldiers are activated. The RC pay system is also very different from the AC pay system making it difficult to train finance soldiers to understand the differences between the two systems. The RCPSOs/USPFOs pay RC soldiers when they are not in a deployed status, so AC and RC finance soldiers do not get hands-on experience in working with the RC pay system until they deploy to operations where they support RC soldiers.

Solution: We are in constant communication with DFAS to solve issues and problems we encounter with the RC pay system. DFAS has helped us resolve issues and we have created a solid partnership with them. In addition, we provide annual training that focuses solely on RC pay. It requires a full-time effort to acquire the necessary expertise required to properly execute the reserve pay mission. We are capturing our lessons learned and sharing them across the finance unit network in theater. We take the lessons learned and refine our processes to ensure maximum effectiveness and efficiency.

3. Educating RC soldiers about how they are paid

Problem: Given the complexity of the RC pay system, it is very difficult for RC soldiers to understand how they are paid. For example, RC soldiers can receive up to 8 LESs a month, and none of the LESs provides a summary rollup of the total pay. If a soldier is missing an LES, he/she may believe there is a pay problem even though the soldier is receiving all his/her entitlements. In addition, the DFAS workarounds cause the entitlements to be paid on different LESs. RC soldiers are not always aware that

entitlements are split across two LESs. As result, soldiers may see a partial entitlement posted on one LES and think they are being underpaid.

Solution: The finance units are constantly educating the RC units on the RC pay system and on what they can expect to see on their LESs. We are creating information sheets for the soldiers and also brief commanders on pay entitlements and the RC pay system. In addition, our customer inquiry personnel spend extra time explaining the entitlements and describing how the entitlements are posted on the LESs.

4. Paying recurring payments like Hardship Duty Pay – Location (i.e. Hungary), OHA, and OCONUS COLA

Problem: Recurring payments are payments that must be input into the RC pay system every month. As the number of RC soldiers continues to grow, it becomes more labor intensive to code the transactions. In addition, the chance for error increases when deployment entitlements must be input each month versus being started using a onetime input transaction.

Solution: Each Finance Office needs to develop a centralized database to track all RC soldiers being serviced by their office. This database helps facilitate the monthly inputs and decreases the chance for error when making the finance system inputs. The difficulty is keeping the database accurate with all the deployments and redeployments. This may necessitate having a dedicated soldier full time to managing the database.

5. RC Soldiers arrive in theater without Family Separation Allowance (FSA) and Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) started

Problem: The USPFOs and RCPSOs are responsible for starting RC soldiers' BAH and FSA, and the mobilization stations are supposed to double check to ensure the entitlements were properly started. In many cases, soldiers arrive in theater without either entitlement started. It is not difficult to start FSA because it only requires the soldier fill out a form (DD Form 1561 – Statement to Substantiate Payment of Family Separation Allowance). Starting BAH is much more complicated because it requires documents to substantiate the entitlement. Substantiating documents include certified marriage certificates, certified birth certificates of dependents, and mortgage/rental agreements to verify residence location. In many cases, soldiers do not have a copy of these documents required for us to start BAH. We do everything we can to assist the soldiers in retrieving the necessary documents, but if the soldiers cannot produce the documents, we cannot start BAH.

Solution: We are working with DFAS to ensure the RCPSOs/USPFOs and the mobilization stations understand their responsibilities. We are also educating the units so they understand what the requirements are.